

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

23 MAY 1962
~~TOP SECRET~~

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1. Laos

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a. Since last Saturday, the Bloc airlift into Tchepone, in southern Laos, has been well above the normal level and rising. We also have seen

North

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Vietnamese Army elements in central-southern Laos. The two together are a repetition of the pattern which preceded the attack on Nam Tha.

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b. Souvanna is expected to return to Laos today but there is no definite word yet that he has done so.

c. Young received what he describes as a "satisfactory" reaction from Sarit yesterday when he saw him to set the record straight on what we envisage Phoumi's future role to be. Young reports that Sarit did not take exception to his presentation and dictated a telegram to Phoumi along the same lines.

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d. Cambodia's fears for the security of its territories adjoining Laos and South Vietnam are of such proportions that the government has turned to our Embassy in Phnom Penh with an urgent request for military materiel. It would be used to outfit troop reinforcements which the Cambodians want to use to prevent Pathet Lao and Viet Cong infiltrations. The Cambodian Foreign Minister has underscored his concern by proposing a Washington trip in late June-early July.

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For The President Only—Top Secret

2. Berlin

A US convoy outbound from Berlin was stopped at the Soviet checkpoint at Babelsberg earlier this morning for more than 5 hours on the grounds of no prior notification. Reports from the scene state that the Soviets declared the convoy under "official detention," the first time they have used this device. 50X1

3. Indonesia-West
New Guinea

Djakarta is building up for an attempt to seize one of the Dutch-held islands off the New Guinea coast or even an enclave on the mainland. Military preparations now in progress indicate that the move could come soon as a means of bringing pressure on the Dutch to negotiate. Indonesian military communications reveal that there are now some 250-300 infiltrators ashore on West New Guinea. 50X1

4. Cuban Communists

Castro is readying another move in his tug-of-war with the old-line Cuban Communists. He now has an eye on the scalp of Lazaro Pena who heads the central labor organization and makes nearly as big a target as Anibal Escalante, the party veteran whom Castro sent into exile in the Bloc last March. We would expect Pena to go out on a wave of strident abuse, but we note that a number of lesser types among the old-liners are being eased out in the provinces in favor of Castro's "new Communists" with no fanfare. 50X1

5. Venezuelan Communists
planning new violence

The Communists, who have been lying low [redacted] intend to show themselves again [redacted] through a series of terrorist forays. [redacted] With the government on the watch for trouble and the armed forces reported to be in good trim, we see little chance that the Communists can touch off anything big, although they can again demonstrate their capacity for sapping the government's energies.

NOTES

- A. Ambassador Thompson reports information from a reliable Soviet source indicating that Kozlov, who has been rated heir-apparent to Khrushchev, has run into political trouble and has been weakened by the recent shifts in the party hierarchy. 50X1

- C. [redacted] we have some indications that Mikoyan, Khrushchev's top trade and aid man, is about to make a visit to Mexico by way of Cuba. With a Soviet industrial exhibit now showing in Rio, he also has a ready-made excuse for a stop-over in Brazil. 50X1

- E. The resignations yesterday of the Syrian foreign and interior ministers further illustrate the present regime's helpless drift. Ambassador Knight reports from Damascus that in his judgment "the Syrian tide has now definitely turned toward Cairo." 50X1

- F. Fanfani tells us that he reassured Spaak during their talks last week that Italy's ideas on the problem of British accession to the EEC are pretty much the same as his own. He indicates, in effect, that Rome continues to see itself as a bridge between France and Germany, on the one hand, and the Benelux little three, on the other, on disputed EEC problems. 50X1

- G. The Afghan government is asking for immediate US help against a threatened locust plague. Government officials say they have held up on a request to Moscow pending our response. 50X1

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DOCUMENTS OF INTEREST

I.

II.

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE